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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 002608

SIPDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/19/2015

TAGS: [MARR](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [IZ](#) [NATO](#)

SUBJECT: NON-COALITION NATO ALLIES, ACCESS TO BAGHDAD
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

REF: A. BAGHDAD 2554 (NOTAL)

[B](#). PARIS 4039 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires David M. Satterfield for reasons
1.4 (a), (d) and (g)

[1](#)1. (C) REFTEL A registers our skepticism concerning the security argument underlying French Ambassador to Iraq Bajolet's request for DoD cardholders' slightly expedited access to Baghdad International Airport (BIAP). We would be loathe to issue such cards, or similarly effective senior-grade MNF-I badges, to the French, based on their weak security argument, as it could be seized upon by the Chinese, Iranian and Russian Embassies, for example, to justify requests for the same privilege. DoD identification cards and senior-grade MNF-I badges grant access to most of the International Zone and, if other checks fail, to the critical Coalition military facility adjacent to BIAP; in the wrong hands, an unacceptable security risk.

[1](#)2. (C) We are, however, eager to enhance NATO allies' embassies the ability to support the Alliance's contribution to Iraq's reconstruction, which, with the autumn opening of the Rustimayah training facility, should expand considerably. On that basis alone, we plan, starting July 5, to offer a more senior-grade MNF-I badge to diplomatic and attache staff of NATO embassies. From that date, subject to standard security checks, we will issue senior-grade MNF-I badges to staff of NATO embassies, who are citizens of that country. We will not, however, grant senior-grade MNF-I badges to local or third-country national employees of those embassies. By our reckoning, we will be extending senior-grade badge privileges to the non-Coalition Alliance embassies of Canada, France, Germany, Greece and Portugal.

[1](#)3. (C) A collateral benefit for the recipient embassies will be the right to enter BIAP through the "Coalition Lane," the longstanding request of the French ambassador. Again, to forestall requests for senior-grade badges from, for example, Iranian diplomats, we will deny any suggestion that the current VVIP lane access to BIAP imposes an unacceptable security risk on non-Coalition diplomats. We will also note to the French and others that the presence in a diplomatic car of non-badged Iraqi drivers, TDYers from capitals or recently ransomed hostages will result in the slight inconvenience of the vehicle's diversion into the VVIP lane.

[1](#)4. (U) Minimize considered for REOs Basrah, Hillah, Kirkuk, and Mosul.
Satterfield